

THE MORNING NEWS

Your Source for local news in English

Caya G.F. Betico Croes 111 T. 588-9517 F. 5889518.

Fundraising begins to renovate Aruba's original protestant church



Original church and new church



ORANJESTAD -- A charming important landmark building, the first protestant church on Aruba was erected in 1846, and still stands in the shadow of the larger, more modern structure located at the head of the Wilhelminastraat in Oranjestad.

This historic building is in a deplorable state, and members of the church have founded Rescati Kerki 1846, to renovate and convert it into a non-denominational chapel available to all faiths for quiet re-

flection. The ultimate goal is to provide a place convenient for spiritual contemplation and refreshment in the mornings, before most start their hectic work day.

The members of the Rescati Kerki 1846, which was founded to accomplish this goal, are Ernst Stutterheim, President, Nicol Baptista, Treasurer, Dito Eman, Fundraising, Cees Sluiter, liaison to the Director of the Aruba Monument Bureau Yvonne Webb-Kock, Yvonne Krumhout and Henna

Snijder, fundraising event organizers, Aimee Henriquez, Secretary, Aldrich and Erin Croes, Marketing and Media and Ruud van den Belt, liaison in Holland.

The charming building was constructed of the typical materials of the time, which included coral rock and limestone, cemented with the adobe particular to the island. Yvonne Webb-Kock, representing the government's participation in the project, is handling the technical details of the project.

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Daylight saving time begins this weekend

Less sleep Sunday



Don't forget to set clocks ahead one hour at 2 a.m. Sunday.

Get ready to rise an hour earlier before work on Monday morning. Clocks will "spring forward" an hour at 2 a.m. Sunday, March 9, allowing for more apparent daylight in the evenings. Time will "fall back" to the standard on Sunday, Nov. 2.

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Venezuelan President Maduro to CNN: U.S. would respond the way I did

CARACAS -- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro is unapologetic about his government's response to opposition protesters during weeks of unrest in Venezuela.

Think about what the U.S. government would do if a political group laid out a road map for overthrowing President Barack Obama, Maduro said yesterday in an exclusive interview with CNN's Christiane Amanpour.

"What would happen in the

United States if a group said they were going to start something in the United States so that President Obama leaves, resigns, to change the constitutional government of the United States?" Maduro said, according to a CNN translation of his remarks. "Surely, the state would react, would use all the force that the law gives it to re-establish order and to put those who are against the Constitution where they belong."

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Minister of Education 'baptizes' new children's magazine



ORANJESTAD -- On Wednesday afternoon, Minister of Education, Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar, received Addonsito Croes and Omar Harms in her office for the official presentation of the Magazine 'Kiniki.' This new magazine for children has been in circulation since last week at all schools and the different book stores.

"I'm very proud of groups of young people such as Addonsito and Omar and the entire team who for many months have been working together on putting such a magazine together. It shows how much talent there is in our

community. You have invested your time and energy to work on something educational for our children," Expressed Minister Hooyboer-Winklaar.

In each edition of the magazine, children have an opportunity to color or do games to help them understand the message that the Minister shares in each edition. Children who participate in the games have the opportunity to win a visit to the Minister at her office. There she will share some moments with the winner and present him/her with different educational prizes.

Addonsito Croes was in-

spired and motivated by his pleasant memories as a child. Today, he is a teacher at the Filomena College MAVO. He wanted to revive the concept of a magazine for children in primary school. "Matinette," was a production of Imelda de Cuba back in his school days, and was his favorite magazine back then. He recalls how that every month he and his brothers tried to win the different prizes that were being offered in that magazine. They colored pictures and did their best to win the different prizes.

Addonsito Croes told how once he won a prize coupon for Afsl.25 to get a hamburger at a famous place on Aruba. To this day, he remembers that occasion as a tremendously pleasant one. Upon his return to Aruba after his studies abroad, Addonsito Croes felt the absence of a production such as Matinette as well as the television program with the same name. "Chabelito" is another magazine that he heard about, but that is no longer being published.

Croes' drive to share those things that contributed to a sane youth back in his years as a child is what resulted in the re-introduction in 2013 of the song festival Voz-I-Landia, which received tremendous enthusiasm from everyone. In the same fashion, he has come up with the idea for a magazine for children. According to Croes, it was his interim director, Mr. Goedgedrag who suggested the name "Kiniki" for the magazine.

Croes' determination and efforts received support from every angle including the Ministry of Education which falls under Michell Hooyboer-Winklaar's watch. The Minister of Education is a staunch supporter of reading and all that contributes to the welfare and positive development of children and young people.

Fundraising begins to renovate...protestant church

Continued from page 1



Rescati Kerki 1846 board



She explained the many challenges of restoring and preserving such materials, and the work that will be done, which includes replacing the roof tiles, the ceiling, the wooden windows and doors, as well as mortaring and painting the entire structure.

The funds required for restoring the old church to its original glory is projected to be one million Arubian florins (\$557,000.) The Protestant Church has already donated 100,000 Arubian florins. Over March and April, there will be quite some media exposure about the project through Magic FM radio as well as several fundraising events are planned.

Aldrick Croes stated that if they could get 10,000 individ-

uals or families to donate 100 Arubian florins each, the required funds would be attained. The result would be an important tourist attraction as well as a place for all the faith to come and feel uplifted, much as the Alto Vista Chapel, which has a catholic affiliation, yet has a distinctive, spiritual atmosphere for all visitors, whatever their beliefs. The Minister of Tourism and Culture will see to it that it also has a plaque displayed for visitors in several languages with a full history of the church, further underlining its landmark value.

It is hoped that all the funds will be raised by September 1 of this year, so the work can begin in earnest.

Happy Women's day

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Horacio Oduber Hospital on the protection of patient, personnel and visitors



ORANJESTAD -- The Dr. Horacio E. Oduber Hospital has a department totally dedicated to the maintenance of hygiene and the prevention of infections in our Hospital, the so-called "Hygiene and Infection prevention Department." There are four specialized professionals working in this department who provide courses to personnel as well as to control patients interned in the Hospital.

Hospital personnel visit each floor of the Hospital on a daily basis to control and verify if all hygiene protocols are being maintained and to control patients with infections or who are at risk of contracting infections. This includes patients with contagious diseases who are in complete or partial isolation.

This department also provides training to personnel with respect to protocols and methods of prevention so as to prevent the transmission of infections or contagious diseases of one patient to another, also for the protection of themselves against diseases and infections. Rica Delamare, the hospital's hygienist gives examples of invasive material that must be used with great caution. Examples are urine catheters, medicine and or nutrition catheters, tubes to feed patients, and tubes for breathing.

This department also ensures that all personnel are up to date on the different levels and types of isolation and rules and what to wear and do in each category.

Continued on page 5

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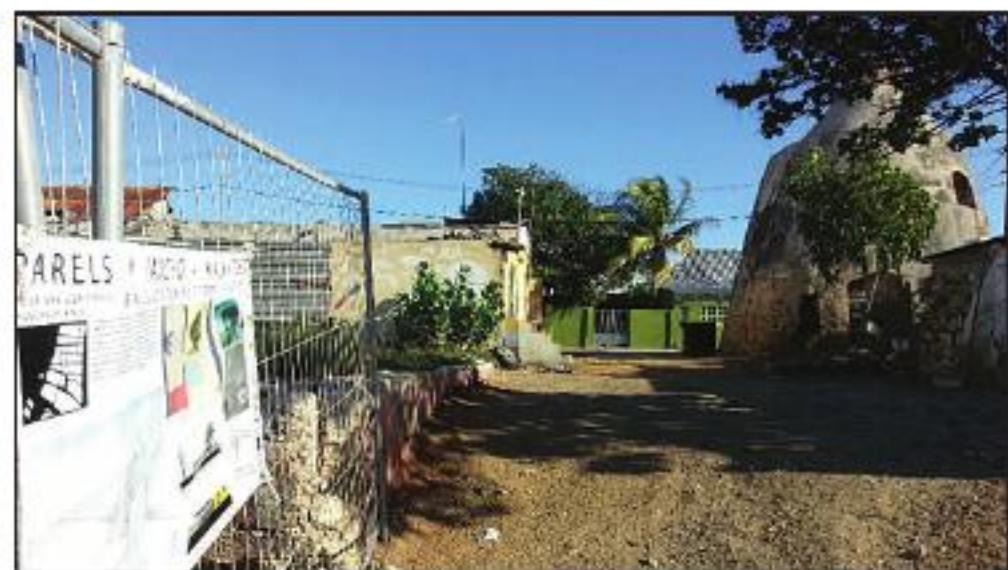
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'Collections make Connections'

ORANJESTAD -- With emphasis on bringing the community closer to our heritage and history, the National Archaeological Museum of Aruba, the Historical Museum and Rancho Foundation, this year again is opening their doors to the general public on National Flag and Anthem Day, March 18th.

They have chosen "Collections make Connections" as the general theme for 2014. The theme has come from the International Council of Museums (ICOM) to emphasize that the collections kept and presented by our Museum is what connects the community to the customs and traditions of the past, they connect different ethnic groups in the community, different generations, and inhabitants of different countries in our region and even connects continents together. The collections are of artifacts as well as of stories, information



and even constructions.

The National Archaeological Museum will open her exposition halls with staff and volunteers eager to show visitors on March 18 all of their favorite objects. There are about 600 objects in the permanent exposition. Those who have visited the museum before will gain new insight as they see the objects from perhaps a new angle. It will also allow entire families to spend pleasant

times together as they observe the objects and hear the stories recounted of how they collected the items and a bit of the history of each piece.

At the Historical Museum in the Fort Zoutman, our young people will present "Xpo 1880." This is a perfect example of how an exposition can connect the future generation with that of the past. Since the opening of the "Expo 1880" it has been visited by schools and others.

For all who have not seen it as yet, you have an opportunity to do so on March 18. The "Community Museum" in San Nicolas will also be open to the public.

Together with the Museums, Rancho Foundation will also be active in the "Forno di Kalki" – and with the miniature boat competitions. In the upcoming days we will share more details, hours, etc of all these activities.



LIVE STANDUP COMEDY IN ARUBA

New York Comedy Stars perform at the Aruba Marriott

ORANJESTAD -- After rave reviews and packed crowds, some of the finest comedians from New York return to Aruba to perform at the Aruba Marriott Resort and Stellaris Casino from Sunday March 9th to Friday March 28th.

The shows will take place six nights per week with the exception of Thursdays.

The shows starts at 9pm. Doors will open at 8pm. Tickets may be purchased with CASH ONLY, and are available for purchase at the Marriott Resort lobby.

As a bonus, each comedy ticket will be worth up to \$50 in Free Slot Play at the Marriott Aruba Stellaris Casino and provide a 20% discount to Marriott's Aruba La Vista restaurant.

"Aruba Ray's Comedy Show" is hosted by comedian Ray Ellin. The ninety-minute event will feature Ellin and fellow comedians Kevin Meaney, Chuck Nice, Lenny Marcus, Joe List, DC Benny, Kyle Grooms, and Moody McCarthy. All performers have appeared in major films, as well as on dozens of tv programs ranging from The Tonight Show to the Letterman Show to Comedy Central.

* Nice and List will appear with Ellin the 9th - 12th.

* Nice and Marcus will appear with Ellin the 14th - 16th.

* Marcus and Grooms will appear with Ellin the 17th - 19th.

Meaney and McCarthy will appear with Ellin the 21st - 23rd. Meaney and Benny will appear with Ellin the 24th to the 28th.

"Each of these comedians are truly excellent, and I'm thrilled to bring them to Aruba, which I love. I first came two years ago, and have returned every month since. It's an amazing island," said Ellin. "And the Marriott will be a fantastic venue for the shows."



Ray Ellin is an accomplished performer, having appeared on numerous television programs including those on Comedy Central, NBC, ABC, and CBS, and is the host of the new "Gong Show Live," a resurrection of the classic 70's television show. He was the host of the popular talk show "Late Net," and hosted the television shows "The Movie Loft," "Brain Fuel," and "New York Now." He also produced and directed the very successful film "The Latin Legends of Comedy."

Kevin Meaney is a huge comedy star. He was on "Saturday Night Live," starred in the sitcom "Uncle Buck," and was in the movie "Big" with Tom Hanks.

He has done two HBO specials, appeared on "The Tonight Show" numerous times with BOTH Johnny Carson and Jay Leno, has appeared on "Oprah," "The David Letterman Show," and starred on Broadway in "Hairspray."

Chuck Nice is a New York radio star and very recognizable face; he has been on countless television shows, from



VH1's "Best Week Ever" to NBC's "Today Show" to Tru TV's "World's Dumbest" to ABC's "The View" to his own show on HGTV.

Lenny Marcus recently made his second appearance on "The David Letterman Show," and has been on Comedy Central, MTV, and at the prestigious Montreal Comedy Festival and the HBO Comedy Festival.



Kyle Grooms has been on the hit program "Chappelle's Show" numerous times. He has had his own Comedy Central special, was on NBC's "Last Comic Standing," and has appeared in multiple television commercials.

Moody McCarthy has had spectacular appearances on both "The David Letterman Show" on CBS and also "The Jimmy Kimmel Show" on ABC.

DC Benny has been in several films, and has appeared on "Showtime at the Apollo," the "Late Late Show" on CBS, and has had his own Comedy Central special.

Joe List tours all over the United States. He has been on NBC's "Last Comic Standing," Comedy Central, and the HBO Comedy Festival.

All eight comics perform regularly in New York City's biggest venues.

Tickets for the shows can be purchased for Cash Only, available at the comedy showroom in the Aruba Marriott Resort lobby. Prices are \$39 per ticket. Seating is first come first served!

As a bonus, each comedy ticket is good for up to \$50 in Free Slot Play at the Marriott Stellaris Casino! And each comedy ticket is also good for a 20% discount at the La Vista restaurant.

The shows are intended for an adult audience. There is NO drink minimum. A full bar and food menu will be available.

For more information call the Aruba Marriott Resort and Stellaris Casino at 011-297-520 6225



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Santa Rosa has wide variety of livestock and pets for sale



ORANJESTAD – Santa Rosa - The Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fishery's mission is to support and assist islanders with agriculture, livestock breeding and catching fish.

Presently, Santa Rosa has a wide variety of livestock for sale, among them piglets of different sizes in a variety of breeds and Black Belly sheep.

Cunuku Chabelito, situated at Santa Rosa, also has small animals for sale as pets, including turtles, rabbits, ducks

and Sierkip chicks.

Potential buyers should be aware Santa Rosa has some requirements regarding the purchase of the animals. They insist in being certain, prior to sale, the animals are well taken care off. Anyone wishing to purchase livestock at Santa Rosa and/or pets from Cunuku Chabelito will receive all the necessary information and advice on how to take care of them.

Santa Rosa is open from Monday to Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tel.: 585 8102.



The protection of patient, personnel and visitors

Continued from page 3

Rica Delamare indicated that the infectious/contagious diseases that must be cautious with are many and includes, for example, tuberculosis (TBC), infections of multi-resistant micro-organisms (including MRSA and ESBL) and Particular Resistant Micro-organisms (BRMO) and chicken pox.

Washing hands is very important in hospital care when moving from one patient to another. The personnel of this department provide the necessary training. They have a hand washing station to control and observe bacteria under special UV lighting to ascertain whether their hands are indeed properly washed.

Keeping one's hands clean daily, primarily at meal times and in the kitchen, is also very important, according to Delamare. She provided a tip to always keep a small bottle of "hand sanitizer" handy to use after returning from the bathroom, before eating, and after sneezing or coughing. She also advises that immediately after returning from the supermarket to wash your hands thoroughly before unpacking your goods, and to take all precautions to keep your kitchen clean. Julaine Andrews added that it is important to ensure that to avoid passing bacteria from one person to another, you should maintain the correct behavior with respect to others in your vicinity when coughing or sneezing. The Hospital has placed posters at strategic points to remind visitors, patients and personnel concerning these matters. Always remember to wash hands after coughing, and if you have used a tissue to dispose of it correctly.

An infection is something undesirable especially in an environment that is sensitive to one's health. We must maintain all precautionary methods at all times for the protection of patients as well as for your own. In this manner our Hospital is informing everyone about proper care and protection to contribute to the welfare of everyone living on our island.



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Russia warns US against 'hasty' actions on the Ukraine

MOSCOW (AFP) - Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov yesterday warned US Secretary of State John Kerry against Washington taking "hasty" action or imposing sanctions over the Ukraine, in what has escalated into the biggest East-West crisis since the Cold War.

In a telephone call, the two men followed up on their talks in Paris and Rome that had failed to lead to an agreement on how to resolve the situation in the Ukraine, where Russian troops have taken effective control of Crimea.

The two diplomatic chiefs "agreed to continue looking at the problems of the sharp political crisis that has seized this country," the Russian foreign ministry said in a statement on its website.

"Lavrov warned against hasty and unthought-through steps capable of causing harm

to Russian-US relations, especially sanctions that will inevitably have a boomerang effect against the US itself," it added.

The US State Department confirmed that Kerry had spoken with Lavrov yesterday from his plane.

US President Barack Obama previously talked by phone with Russian President Vladimir Putin for an hour about the Ukraine, including a visa ban and possible further sanctions against Russian officials, the White House said.

The United States is suggesting that international mediation efforts could bring the Ukraine and Russia together for discussions.

State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said that Washington was discussing with its partners the formation of some kind of contact group, even though Moscow is likely

to be distrustful of outside engagement.

"The issue here is getting Russia and the new government in the Ukraine at the same table having a discussion, and there are a range of partners and players in the international community that can be a part of that," she told reporters.

"Russia is fairly isolated here from where the international community is," Psaki said, adding many countries had denounced its moves in Crimea as "illegal and inappropriate."

But she said: "There are still partners who would be willing to and happy to be a part of bringing an end to this through diplomatic channels."

Yesterday, President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that Russia does not want a new Cold War.

Venezuelan President Maduro to CNN...

Continued from page 1



Amanpour speaks with Maduro

Maduro told Amanpour that a minority group among the opposition is responsible for a "violent plan." That group, he said, has put the opposition in a "dire situation."

The Venezuelan President spoke with Amanpour in an exclusive interview a day after the one-year anniversary of the death of his predecessor, President Hugo Chavez.

Weeks of anti-government protests have rattled Venezuela and drawn sharp responses from Maduro, who's called for peace while describing those opposing him as fascists and extremists.

Demonstrators say goods shortages, inflation and high crime brought them to the streets. It's the biggest threat Maduro has faced since his election last year.

One opposition leader who encouraged protests, Leopoldo Lopez, is behind bars, facing charges of arson and conspiracy.

Protesters have accused Maduro's government of violence that has claimed at least 20 lives during the protests. Government officials have blamed Lopez and other oppo-

sition leaders for fueling the violence and not doing enough to stop it.

Meanwhile, diplomatic tensions between the United States and Venezuela have been running high over the unrest.

Last month Maduro expelled three U.S. diplomats from Venezuela, accusing them of conspiring against his government. The United States expelled three Venezuelan diplomats last week in retaliation.

But Maduro has also recently suggested he wants to start fresh with the United States and rekindle diplomatic relations. Venezuela's foreign ministry announced last week the country wanted to send Maximilian Arvelaez to Washington as its new ambassador -- a position that's been vacant since 2008, when Venezuela expelled the U.S. ambassador and the United States kicked out Venezuela's envoy in response.

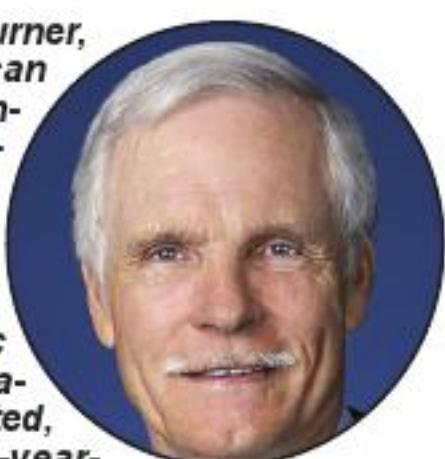
Last month a State Department spokeswoman said the United States wants to develop "a more constructive relationship with Venezuela."

CNN founder Ted Turner hospitalized in Argentina

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Ted Turner, the CNN founder and American media tycoon turned philanthropist, was hospitalized during a trip to Argentina, a medical source said yesterday, with reports suggesting he could have appendicitis.

A source at a private clinic in Bariloche, a tourist destination where Turner was admitted, confirmed to AFP that the 75-year-old, who owns property in the Argentine province of Neuquen, later discharged himself.

News websites said the billionaire may have flown on to Buenos Aires to continue his treatment for an abdominal condition or appendicitis, but those reports were not officially confirmed.



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Colombian election seen as referendum on peace talks

BOGOTA (AFP) - Colombia holds legislative elections Sunday that are seen as a referendum on peace talks with FARC leftist guerrillas and a trial run for a presidential vote in May.

Since they opened in late 2012 in Cuba, the talks that President Jose Manuel Santos has held with the Marxist rebels have dominated political life in Colombia.

The FARC, or Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, have been fighting successive governments for 50 years and are Latin America's oldest insurgency.

Santos is seeking a second term, and his three party coalition government is expected to retain control of both chambers of Congress.

That would be key for the peace process, which so far enjoys the support of most Colombians.

Santos officially announced his candidacy for another term this week, and said he wanted to "finish up the job" of bringing peace to a country that has endured decades of bloodshed.

The big question Sunday will be how Santos' predeces-

sor Alvaro Uribe does in his quest for a seat in the Senate.

Uribe accuses Santos, his former defense minister, of treason by turning the FARC into "political players" with a high profile stage in Havana where the peace talks are being held.

Unbe, a conservative, is still popular for his no-holds-barred fight against the FARC while in power from 2002 to 2010. Campaigning on the slogan "No to impunity," he is Colombia's first ex-president to seek a seat in the Senate, from which he aims to challenge the course of the talks.

But his new party, the Democratic Center, is only projected to win about 14 percent of the votes, which would give it just 19 of 102 seats in the upper chamber. "Unbe's list is not going to win a majority, but to some extent it will allow him to shape the national agenda," said Luis Guillermo Patino, head of the political science department at the Pontifical Bolivarian University in Medellin.

Hundreds of thousands of people have died in the half

century old conflict, which stems from gaping inequality between landless peasants and rich landowners.

Over the years, the war has become a complex mix of rebels, paramilitary militia, drug traffickers and criminal gangs.

Leftist parties are traditionally weak in Colombia and they have failed to benefit from the peace talks.

At the same time, although the leftist parties are legal and democratic, they are associated with the armed struggle, said Patino. An added complication is the lack of a ceasefire during the peace process.

The elections have seen the rebirth of the once defunct Patriotic Union, the FARC's political ally during a first, failed round of peace talks in the 1980s, before suffering a wave of murders at the hands of paramilitary groups.

Its main candidate is Aida Avella, who survived an assassination attempt in 1996 and went into exile for 17 years.

She returned to Colombia to run in Sunday's elections but is not expected to do well.

Interpol says considering Yanukovych warrant request

LYON (AFP) - Interpol said Friday it was considering a request from Ukraine's new government to issue an arrest warrant for ousted president Viktor Yanukovych.

The international police organisation confirmed it had received a request from authorities in Kiev on Wednesday to issue a "Red Notice", or international wanted persons alert, for Yanukovych on charges including abuse of power and murder.

The request "is being assessed by Interpol's office of legal affairs to determine whether it conforms with the organisation's constitution and rules", it said in a statement.

Ukraine's interim prosecutor said on February 26 that Kiev had requested an international

arrest warrant for Yanukovych over the "mass murder" of protesters during the anti-government demonstrations that toppled the pro-Russian leader four days earlier.

At the time, Yanukovych's whereabouts were unknown, though he resurfaced in Russia two days later.

Russia is an Interpol member, but the organisation stressed that it "cannot compel any member country to arrest the subject of a Red Notice".

Since Yanukovych's ouster, set in motion by his refusal to sign a landmark association accord with the European Union, tensions between the West and Russia over Ukraine's future have escalated to levels not seen since the Cold War.

Four men flogged for homosexuality in Nigeria: court

KANO (AFP) - An Islamic court in northern Nigeria on Thursday ordered four men to be flogged with horsewhips and fined after being convicted of homosexuality, a court clerk told AFP.

The four, aged between 22 and 28, were sentenced and received 15 lashes each in secret after a trial at the Upper Sharia Court in the Unguwar Jaki district of the city of Bauchi.

Court clerk Abdul Mohammed said the case was concluded behind closed doors for security reasons after an angry mob attacked the court during their trial, demanding they be executed and forcing the hearing to be suspended.

The court would adopt a similar strategy on three pending cases, he added.

The four were among seven defendants formally charged

by the Bauchi State Sharia Commission on January 6 with belonging to a gay club and receiving \$150,000 in donations from the United States for an apparent membership drive.

Four others were brought before a separate Islamic court on the same charges, while a Christian suspect was presented before a secular, state court.

The arrests and formal charges came days after it was confirmed that Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan had signed a bill into law banning gay marriage and same-sex unions.

The law, which carries a maximum 14-year prison term for anyone entering such unions and up to 10 years in jail for supporting gay groups and clubs, provoked international condemnation.

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Global warming amplifying malaria risk

PARIS (AFP) - Global warming will expose millions more people to malaria as parasite-bearing mosquitoes move to higher altitudes, according to new research into the health perils from climate change.

Tropical highland areas in Africa, Asia and central and southern America are particularly at risk, a study in the US journal Science said Thursday.

Malaria, which killed an estimated 620,000 people in 2012, is among a host of diseases that researchers warn will spread more easily thanks to global warming.

For Ethiopia alone, "a one-degree-Celsius (1.8 deg Fahrenheit) increase in temperature will lift the area where malaria can occur by 150 metres (487 feet)," Menno Bouma of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine told AFP.

Bouma and a team scrutinised malaria records from the highland regions of Colombia from 1990 to 2005 and Ethiopia from 1993 to 2005.

They found that in warmer years, people living at higher elevations experienced more malaria infections than they do in cooler years.

People in areas previously unaffected by malaria never built up immunity, and will be particularly vulnerable.

Bouma said other tropical highland areas surrounded by malaria-endemic regions "are likely to be affected by a similar principle" as found in the study.

But Bouma said the study did not automatically imply a higher malaria risk for all countries at higher altitudes, as a special mix of climate and socio-economic conditions had to be present.

Transferred by a parasite transmitted through mosquito bites, malaria can be prevented with nets, insecticides and medicines.

Symptoms include fever, headache, and vomiting. If left untreated, it can kill by disrupting the blood supply to vital organs.

Malaria is not the only threat to human health receiving a boost from global warming.

"Many of the major killers

such as diarrhoeal diseases, malnutrition, malaria and dengue are highly climate-sensitive and are expected to worsen as the climate changes," according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Dengue, which is a mosquito-borne disease like malaria, is spreading at an alarming rate and had "epidemic potential", according to the UN agency.

It causes high fever, headaches, itching and joint pains, and can lead to haemorrhaging and death.

The mosquito is an invasive species first spotted in Europe in Albania in 1979 -- possibly having arrived there in a shipment of goods from China, investigators believe.

A draft document to be vetted at an IPCC meeting in Yokohama, Japan, at the end of March, warns that climate change this century "will lead to increases in ill-health in many regions".

Video games offer hope for autistic children

ASHBURN (AFP) - The game over, a beaming Sawyer and Michael, both 10, cheer and give each other a high-five.

It is a small but significant reaction that experts say shows how children with autism can benefit from playing some computer games.

The Steuart W. Weller Ashburn Elementary School in Virginia is one of the specialized centers in the United States testing Microsoft's popular Xbox game console, equipped with "Kinect."

With Kinect, launched by Microsoft in 2010, kids can play videogames without controllers. Instead, they use their bodies to dictate the action on the screen, courtesy of a motion detector.

Kinect was not specifically designed for children with autism, but experts say the device is proving beneficial for some with the disability.

E-cigarette use linked to higher smoking odds

WASHINGTON (AFP) - E-cigarette use among US youths doubled in just one year, and those who tried the unregulated devices were more likely to smoke conventional cigarettes as well, a study said Thursday. Commonly sold at convenience stores and gas stations, e-cigarettes are battery powered gadgets that deliver nicotine through a vapor that may be fruit or candy-flavored. Just over three percent of US adolescents had ever tried an e-cigarette in 2011, and that more than doubled to 6.5 percent in 2012, said the research in JAMA Pediatrics, a journal of the American Medical Association. Similarly, 1.1 percent of middle and high school students said they currently used e-cigarettes in 2011, a figure that rose to two percent in 2012. Youths who had tried e-cigarettes were more likely to experiment with conventional cigarettes, and were more likely to be current cigarette smokers than kids who had not tried them, said the study. Since e-cigarettes are not subject to the same advertising and marketing restrictions as tobacco, some health experts are concerned that they could be tempting a new generation of addicts. The US Food and Drug Administration, which gained oversight of tobacco products in 2009, is currently considering whether to regulate e-cigarettes.

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In a driverless future, drivers will do anything else

GENEVA (AFP) - Brew an espresso, watch a movie on a large screen, surf the Internet or simply sit and chat with friends?

As automakers and technology firms steer towards a future of driverless cars, a Swiss think tank is at the Geneva Motor Show this week showing off its vision of what vehicles might look like on the inside when people no longer have to focus on the road.

"Once I can drive autonomously, would I want to watch while my steering wheel turns happily from left to right?" asked Rinspeed founder and chief executive Frank Rinderknecht.

"No. I would like to do anything else but drive and watch the traffic. Eat, sleep, work, whatever you can imagine," he told AFP at the show, which opens its doors to the public Thursday.

Google is famously working on fully autonomous cars, and traditional carmakers are rapidly developing a range of autonomous technologies as well.

With analysts expecting sales of self-driving, if not completely driverless, cars to begin taking off by the end of this decade, Rinderknecht insists it's time to consider how the experience of riding in a car will could be radically redefined.

Patting his shiny Xchange concept car, Rinderknecht says he envisages a future where car passengers will want to do the same kinds of things we today do to kill time on trains and airplanes.

So Rinspeed has revamped the interior of Tesla's Model S electric car to show carmakers how they might turn standard-sized vehicles into entertainment centres, offices and meeting spots wrapped into one.

The seats can slide, swivel, and tilt into more than 20 positions, allowing passengers to turn to face each other or a 32-inch screen in the back.

Up front too, an entertainment system lines the entire length of the dashboard, and the steering wheel can be shifted to allow passengers a



An hostess poses inside the new Rinspeed "XchangE" concept car displayed at the Swiss carmaker's booth

better view of the screens.

And of course there is an espresso machine.

While brewing coffee, video conferencing and keeping an eye on your email at 120 kilometres an hour may sound like a fantasy today, Rinderknecht is convinced it could happen in the not too distanced future.

"We think this is what things could look like in a few years time," he said.

Driving, he said, is on the cusp of being redefined, allowing

people to take the wheel for pleasure, for instance while going over an Alpine pass, but handing over control of the car on tedious stretches.

"If I have to go three hours from Geneva to Zurich and it's congested, I'm not doing anything... I want to be doing something else," he said.

Carmakers at the Geneva Motor Show seemed to agree that vehicles that drive themselves, at least to a certain extent, are on the horizon.

"Autonomous driving is an inevitability that we are approaching very rapidly," Hyundai Europe COO Allan Rushforth told AFP.

He stressed though that "full automation" was not a priority.

Ford Europe chief Stephen Odelle also said the technology was speeding forward, but added that he believed "the technology will be ready before legislation and consumers are."

"How comfortable will consumers be with fully automated cars?" he asked, adding that legislating for liability would be quite tricky with no driver behind the wheel.

Rinderknecht acknowledged there are obstacles, but insisted "they can be overcome."

He pointed out that accident reduction is actually a major argument for automation, since once the technology is finalised the machines should be far more reliable than humans.

And while it will be an upward battle to redefine liability legislation, "I think it can be done, because laws must adapt to life, and life as we all know changes," he said.

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EARLY BIRD SPECIAL

Under shadow of spy scandal, Merkel, Cameron head to tech fair

BERLIN (AFP) - The German and British leaders will officially open the world's biggest high-tech fair on Sunday, amid global debate about data security following revelations of mass US and British online snooping.

Chancellor Angela Merkel joins fellow conservative Prime Minister David Cameron to inaugurate the CeBIT in the northern German city of Hanover, 10 days after her high-profile London visit.

Berlin and London have both been caught up in the surveillance scandal revealed by rogue US intelligence analyst Edward Snowden, but Russia's brinkmanship over Ukraine may well be the main focus of their bilateral talks.

Britain is the partner country at this year's CeBIT, which opens its doors for a five-day run on Monday and is focused on the theme of "datafication", the ability to use vast amounts of data quickly and responsibly.

About 3,400 international exhibitors will set up shop in the hangar-like halls of the sprawling IT fair, where futuristic robots and the fresh blood of 300 start-ups will mix with cutting-edge computer technology.

Around 500 companies will exhibit digital security solutions, he said, noting an IT industry trend towards protecting data through the use of objects such as armbands or rings, rather than passwords.

At last year's CeBIT opening, Merkel showed off her ultra-secure new smartphone, only to learn months later that US intelligence had allegedly eavesdropped on her mobile phone conversations, as well as hoovering vast amounts of online data and telephone records from average citizens.

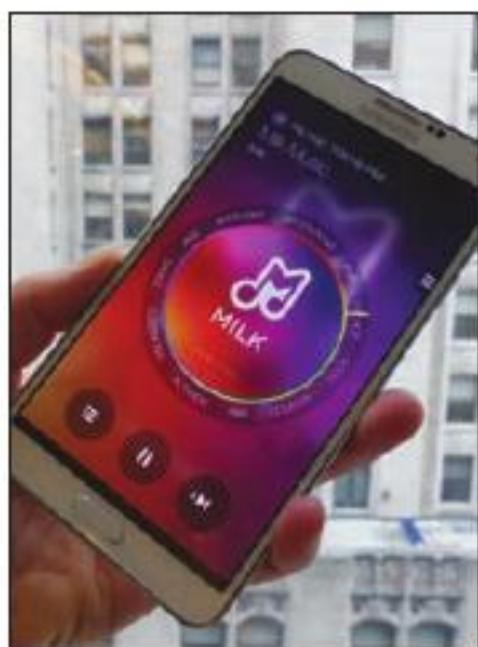
Merkel has since raised the need to bolster citizens' data protection by building up European communication networks that bypass US Internet giants.

Sass pointed to the exponential growth of global data, saying that the equivalent of all data ever required by humans through to the year 2003 is now produced in 10 minutes worldwide.

competitive economy".

High-tech gadgets will also be much on display at CeBIT, including "Charlie", the first robot with an actuated spine and feet that can "feel", developed by the German Center for Artificial Intelligence with Bremen University.

Samsung jumps into crowded music market



WASHINGTON (AFP) - Samsung on Friday unveiled a free music service for users of its Galaxy smartphones, entering a crowded market that includes Pandora, Spotify and Apple's iTunes.

The service dubbed "Milk Music" will offer some 200 ad-free radio stations to US customers with Samsung Galaxy devices.

"Milk introduces a fresh approach to music that reflects our innovation leadership and our focus on creating best-in-class consumer experiences," said Gregory Lee, president and chief executive of Samsung Telecommunications America.

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YouTube and Facebook could be banned, warns Turkey PM

ANKARA (AFP) - Turkey's embattled prime minister has warned that his government could ban popular social media networks YouTube and Facebook after a raft of online leaks added momentum to a spiraling corruption scandal.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan has already tightened his government's grip over the Internet, generating criticism at home and abroad about rights in the EU-hopeful country.

Access to thousands of websites have been blocked in recent years in Turkey.

YouTube was unavailable for two years until 2010 because of material deemed insulting to the country's still-revered founder, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

The site still managed to be one of the most visited in Turkey, with users including Erdogan himself resorting to proxy servers to dodge the ban.

Further Internet curbs allowed the authorities to keep a record of someone's web activity for up to two years and block sites deemed insulting or as invading privacy.

A series of other leaks on YouTube showed Erdogan meddling in trade deals and court cases.

The Turkish premier dismissed them as a "vile" and an "immoral" montage by rivals ahead of key local elections on March 30.

Erdogan has accused loyalists of ally-turned-opponent Fethullah Gulen, an influential Muslim cleric based in the United States, of orchestrating the graft probe.

The Turkish strongman has responded by purging police and passing laws to increase his grip over the Internet and the judiciary.

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Litter!

European stocks down after Gazprom supply cut threat

LONDON (AFP) - Europe's main stock markets perked up yesterday on strong US jobs data but the optimism proved short-lived as Russian energy giant Gazprom's threat to cut off gas to the Ukraine quickly sent the indices back down.

Frankfurt's DAX 30 tumbled 2.01 percent to close at 9,350.75 points, while London's FTSE 100 dropped 1.12 percent to 6,712.67 points and in Paris the CAC 40 fell 1.15 percent to 4,366.42 points.

The indices had briefly ticked up after Washington said the US economy generated 175,000 jobs in February, a rebound from two poor months.

"The US labour market rebounded more than expected in February... Consensus had been for a 149k rise," said Robert Wood, chief economist at Berenberg.

But then Gazprom warned Kiev of "a return to the situation at the start of 2009" when the energy giant halted gas to the Ukraine in a move that also left much of the EU without supplies, leading to sharp sell-off in stocks.

"The quite encouraging US employment figures caused a positive reaction, but the situation is still tense in Ukraine with Gazprom's threats keeping the markets under pressure," said Saxo Bank analyst Andrea Tueni.

Nevertheless the positive employment numbers lifted the dollar, strengthening the currency to 103.36 yen from 103.07 yen.

It also shaved euro gains, bringing the bloc's common currency off a two-year high of \$1.3915 in morning trade to \$1.3866. On Thursday, it was trading at \$1.3859 late in New York.

Wall Street opened firmer following the employment numbers, but later turned mixed.

In midday trading the Dow Jones Industrial Average added

0.17 percent to 16,450.21 points.

The broad-based S&P 500 slid 0.08 percent to 1,875.58, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index shed 0.44 percent to 4,333.17.

On the London Bullion Market, the price of gold gained to \$1,335.25 an ounce from \$1,345.25 on Thursday.

Investors had been looking to US jobs data for guidance, with optimism fueled by Thursday's numbers showing that first-time claims for unemployment benefits had fallen last week to a three-month low of 323,000 from the prior week's revised reading of 349,000.

That data helped push up most Asian stock markets.

Tokyo rose 0.92 percent, Sydney added 0.30 percent, while Seoul finished flat.

Shanghai edged a touch lower while Hong Kong eased 0.19 percent.

- Gazprom threat -

But the Ukraine quickly came back into focus in European markets as Gazprom chief executive Alexei Miller said: "The Ukraine has defacto stopped paying for gas... We cannot deliver gas for free. Either the Ukraine pays the debt and pays for current sup-

plies or the risk appears of a return to the situation at the start of 2009."

The supply cut in 2009 left some European households freezing in the dead of winter and also hit industry.

Miller said that yesterday was the final cut-off date for payments for February's gas deliveries to the Ukraine.

"Gazprom has not received the payment on its account. The debt due has increased and is now \$1.89 billion," he added.

Turning off gas to the Ukraine would punish the new Ukrainian government that took over after the ousting of president Viktor Yanukovych, which Russia has so far refused to recognise.

But it would also hit Europe, which cheered the fall of Yanukovych and relies on Ukraine for the transit of much of the gas that it receives from Russia.

Europe imports around a third of its total gas needs from Russia.

Gazprom has already said it will end the substantial discount that Ukraine receives on market gas prices from April. But the European Union has said it will help the Ukraine pay its bills.



MIAMI : A Staples store is seen in Miami, Florida. Staples Inc. announced it plans on closing as many as 12 percent of its North American stores and cut as much as \$500 million in costs. (AFP PHOTO)



LICHENHORST : A seasonal worker crops first asparagus of the season on March 7, 2014 in Lichtenhorst, northwestern Germany. The early harvest is possible due to a heating floor and a canvas coverage providing warmer temperatures for the vegetable growing in the soil. (AFP PHOTO)

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Venezuela suspends negotiation on debt with Panama

Venezuelan corporations owe nearly USD 2 billion

CARACAS -- Venezuelan Foreign Minister Elias Jaua has informed that break-off of Venezuela-Panama ties includes the suspension of the negotiations on the debt owed by Venezuelan corporations to Panamanian firms based in Colon Free Zone (ZLC).

CFZ's manager Leopoldo Benedetti told AFP that Venezuelan businessmen's debt to providers at the Colon Free Zone (CFZ) amounts to some USD 2 billion, and "arises from the lack of currency of Venezuelan entrepreneurs caused by US dollar shortage in the country."

Following the break-off in the bilateral relations, Panamanian President Ricardo Martinelli vowed on Twitter that the policies favoring migration and investments by Venezuelans would not change.

Furthermore, the move would not hit Venezuela's oil exports as oil tankers do not pass through the Panama Canal.

President Ricardo Martinelli warned Venezuela yesterday that its decision to break off relations with Panama was no excuse for not paying off its \$1 billion debt.

"I don't want to think that this is an excuse not to pay and that the Venezuelan state is a deadbeat," he told re-

porters.

But the manager of the Colon Free Zone, Leopoldo Benedetti, said Venezuelan importers have about \$2 billion in unpaid bills.

Maduro lashed out Wednesday at Panama, calling it a "lackey" of the United States for seeking a meeting of the Organization of American States on the turmoil.

But Martinelli suggested that Maduro's real motive was to get out from under huge bills owed to the Colon duty-free zone and to COPA, the Panamanian airline.

"Venezuela would appear to be bankrupt, although it shouldn't be because it is a very rich country," said Martinelli.

It "has no excuse" to not pay off its debts, he added.

COPA, which Martinelli said is owed \$480 million, issued a statement saying its flights between Panama and Venezuela were operating normally.

Venezuela on Thursday ordered the expulsion of Panama's ambassador and three other diplomats.

At least 20 people have been killed in more than a month of anti-government protests in Venezuela that President Nicolas Maduro blames on a US-backed "fascist" plot.

Daily Exchange Rates				
Current as of: 03/07/2014	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.60	1.62	1.64
Britain	GBP	2.92	2.97	3.03
Switzerland	CHF	202.89	203.61	204.41
Netherlands	EUR	245.22	247.46	249.95
Sweden	SEK	26.95	27.67	28.47
Denmark	DKK	32.20	32.92	33.72
Norway	NOK	28.92	29.64	30.44
Japan	JPY	171.46	173.02	174.76
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Renowned for reliable construction, developers of O Condominiums consider the boutique community will be the "jewel in the crown" of the nine projects they have successfully completed and

maintain. It is only three stories and twenty luxurious units, of which 14 will be oceanfront, the remainder, ocean view. Sizes range from one bedroom condominiums with a bath and a half to three-bedrooms, each bedroom with its own bath, and an additional guest half/bath. The designs include a family entertainment room that will

be specially fitted with electronic and Internet connections and outlets enabling a state-of-the-art-home theater. An important aspect of this singular facility is owners have various options to customize kitchens and fixtures to their particular tastes and standards.

Each apartment sports an extremely spacious 35 square meter covered terrace overlooking the sea. Windows will be double-paned and doors

have weather stripping to insure less cost on air-conditioning, which is integrated into construction. Homeowners will have input into the finishing they prefer in the kitchen and other rooms, to customize your condominium to your taste. Public amenities will include an elegant pool deck, concierge

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O Condominiums officially opened the doors of their sales office onsite at Eagle Beach on December 24. Interested parties can inspect the project in a spacious plot right next to the gourmet Screaming Eagle restaurant. The project is directed towards discerning clients seeking a top quality property on Aruba in an ideal, tranquil, beachfront location.

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first won this charming eatery their loyal clientele. She can be counted on to be conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generations. As Varella says, "My mom loves and lives to cook. Even when she is not at work in the restaurant, she is experimenting with new dishes all day at home."

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machi"- "Grandma's Beef Stew," or their fresh, whole snapper, with Mama Luisa's delectable salsa criollo. Don't miss the specialty of the house, a favorite local delicacy, Keshi Yena - "Filled Cheese." This is a tasty, filling stew of chicken, with other ingredients that are handy that day, all encased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It is satisfying and particularly memorable. Regional side dishes and some of Mama's secret recipe prepara-



Mama Luisa hard at work in the kitchen

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Aside from an extensive regular menu they also have daily specials made from whatever is in season, and Mama Luisa is in the mood to prepare, so don't be shy about asking for something that may not be on the menu, as they are always eager to please.

The Queen's is open daily from 3:00 pm - 11:00 pm, offering both indoor and outdoor dining.

Pistorius trial - key points from day five

PRETORIA (AFP) - Day five of Oscar Pistorius's murder trial heard testimony from an emotional ex-girlfriend and from a security guard who said the athlete told him everything was fine after shots rang out from his home.

Security guard Pieter Baba described Pistorius telling him on the phone that "everything is fine" after gunshots were reported the night Reeva Steenkamp died, but that the athlete was crying.

Pistorius's ex-girlfriend Samantha Taylor, who broke down several times in the stand, told the court that Pistorius kept a gun on him at all times.

Testifying about an unrelated gun charge that Pistorius faces, Taylor said that the Paralympian had once shot a bullet through the sunroof of a car. The defence denies the incident.

She said the weapon was fired after Pistorius became

"angry" about being stopped by the police, who had reprimanded him for having a gun on his seat.

Taylor also described how Pistorius confronted the driver of a car that had been following the couple.

"He jumped out of the car with his gun and held it to someone's window and then they drove away," she said.

Pistorius denies having approached the car.

Football: Nike overtake Adidas in World Cup teams battle

BARCELONA (AFP) - Nike will supply the kit for more teams than Adidas for the first time ever at this year's World Cup finals.

The two sports giants will throw Lionel Messi against Cristiano Ronaldo and Spain against Brazil to see who can claim a bigger chunk of the multi-billion dollar market for football boots, shirts and shorts.

Both say they are the leaders, but analysts say Nike is making an aggressive push in key football markets. The company says it could soon earn more from soccer than basketball -- the sport that launched Nike as a global force.

Adidas of Germany has traditionally dominated soccer



pitches and is an official World Cup sponsor. Adidas will have a "dominant role" at the finals in Brazil, chief executive Herbert Hainer said this week.

Nike, which leads in sales of all sports goods, only entered the football market in the 1990s but has since made stunning progress.

It will be providing kit for

10 teams at this year's World Cup finals -- Australia, Brazil, Croatia, England, France, Greece, Netherlands, Portugal, South Korea and United States.

Adidas has dropped to eight teams from 10 in 2010. It still has a formidable line-up however, with reigning champions Spain, Argentina, Colombia, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria and Russia.

Nike is "the world's leading football brand," Trevor Edwards, president of Nike Brands, told AFP in an interview at the launch of the company's latest soccer boot, the Magista, in Barcelona on Thursday.

Visibility means everything in this battle and players and their boots will be a key weapon.

Nike sponsors Argentine star Messi and his Barcelona clubmate Andres Iniesta will showcase the company's new boots at the World Cup.

Adidas have Portugal's Ronaldo at Real Madrid and Uruguayan goalscorer Luis Suarez will be shooting with Adidas's rival Primeknits boots in Brazil.

With record sales of football gear expected this year, every market will be fought for during the four-week tournament.

By the time World Cup starts on June 12, Nike expects to make one billion dollars a year in Brazil, said the executive.

Messi vomiting not normal admits Barca boss



BARCELONA (AFP) - Barcelona coach Gerardo Martino has voiced his concern for star player Lionel Messi after the Argentine was seen vomiting during his country's goalless draw with Romania on Wednesday. Messi was also sick on the pitch recently in Barca's 3-1 defeat at Real Sociedad and Martino admitted the player has visited specialists to try and resolve the problem. "It is not a normal situation, but there is no alarm. He has been to see specialists but as yet they haven't found a solution. "The important thing is that it doesn't affect him from doing his job. It is something that he has had for a while now." Messi was just one of a number of Barca players away on international duty in midweek with Brazilian duo Neymar and Dani Alves only returning to training on Friday having represented their country against South Africa in Johannesburg. And Martino lamented having such little time to prepare for the Catalans visit to relegation threatened Valladolid today.



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BRIEFS:



PARIS (AFP) - Michael Schumacher remains in a "wake-up phase" from the coma he was placed in following a life-threatening skiing accident nearly ten weeks ago, his spokeswoman said Friday. The statement from Sabine Kehm was the first since February 13, when the Formula One legend's family said they continued to strongly believe that he would recover. Schumacher's condition has been the subject of much speculation by media around the world but few details have been released by the medical team looking after him in the University clinic in the French Alpine city of Grenoble. Two weeks ago, his friend and former teammate Felipe Massa was quoted as saying that Schumacher seemed to respond to him during a recent visit.



DORAL (AFP) - Tiger Woods watches a putt on the 16th green during the second round of the World Golf Championships-Cadillac Championship at Trump National Doral on March 7, 2014 in Doral, Florida.

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Baseball: Tanaka gives up homer in first Yankees start



tired the first two batters he saw in the third inning.

Freddy Garcia followed with a homer to right field, tying the game at 1-1, but Kevin Frandsen grounded out to end the inning and Tanaka's time on the mound.

In all, Tanaka threw 25 of his 41 pitches for strikes.

The Yankees paid \$20 million to Japan's Rakuten Eagles after inking the deal. Tanaka went 24-0 for the Japan Series champions last year.

CLEARWATER (AFP) - Masahiro Tanaka surrendered his first home run on Thursday in his first exhibition start for the New York Yankees, a rain-delayed matchup with the Philadelphia Phillies.

The 25-year-old Japanese right-hander struck out one batter without allowing a walk, surrendering one run on two hits and inducing seven groundouts.

In two pre-season training appearances for the Major League Baseball Yankees after signing a seven-year deal worth \$155 million (112m euros) in January, Tanaka has given up one run on four hits while striking out four over five innings.

Tanaka ended the first inning in order by striking out Chase Utley, allowed a Marlon Byrd double in the second but did not give up a run and re-

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Four companies ready for annual Basketball friendship games



ORANJESTAD - Last Monday evening all representatives of the Marriott Hotel, Divi Village, Flora Market and Caribbean Drip Irrigation met for the last time before their friendship games on March 10th. The games are scheduled to be played at the Centro di Bario Brazil.

The representatives of the four companies met to discuss and establish the rules for the games. Emphasis was placed on the starting time of the game. It was decided that the team to arrive late will be disqualified from the game. All teams must have ladies on the team and three masculine players. The first game will be played on Monday, March 10th at 7:30pm at the Centro di Bario Brazil. The last game will be on April 7th. Marriott

Hotel and Divi Village will play the first game followed by Flora Market and Caribbean Drip Irrigation.

All the prizes were presented to the representatives of each company. They were able to see what prizes they would be competing for. Marriott Hotel players will be clad in a blue uniform, Caribbean Drip Irrigation will have 3 uniforms that they will use for each game. Flora Market players will have a white and blue uniform. The Divi Village did not reveal their uniform colors as yet. All the games are friendship games with one referee for all the games. The group appealed to all employees of the four companies and others interested to come out and support the players in full force.

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BOXING: Alvarez back as Molina, Santa Cruz defend titles



LAS VEGAS (AFP) - Saul "Canelo" Alvarez returns to the ring after suffering his first career loss to Floyd Mayweather, fighting today on a card that includes two Mexican compatriots defending world titles.

Former World Boxing Council and World Boxing Association champion Alvarez, 42-1-1 with 30 knockouts, will face countryman Alfredo Angulo, 22-3 with 18 knockouts.

Alvarez, whose nickname means "cinnamon" in Spanish, lost a majority decision and his crowns to unbeaten US star Mayweather last September.

"I learned a lot from fighting Floyd, but I'm ready to get back in the ring to maintain the path that I was on before," Alvarez said.

"What happened in September is in the past. I'm fully concentrating on this fight."

The Las Vegas card also features Leo Santa Cruz, 26-0 with one drawn and 15 knockouts, defending the WBC super bantamweight crown against Mexican southpaw Cristian Mijares, 49-7 with two drawn and 24 knockouts.

Santa Cruz will make the second defence of the crown he won last August with a third-round knockout of compatriot Victor Terrazas. He de-

fended the title last December, taking a unanimous decision over Puerto Rican southpaw Cesar Seda.

"I have a lot of respect for Mijares, who was a great champion and is still very fast," Santa Cruz said. "His style can be complicated which is why I've been working in the gym with southpaws. I am going to stop him."

Molina, 22-5 with two drawn and six knockouts, will defend the International Boxing Federation light middleweight title against unbeaten American Jermall Charlo, 17-0 with 13 knockouts.

"This guy is undefeated, but he's never faced anyone like me," Molina said. "I'm more eager and hungry than I've ever been for a fight in my life. I'm still the champion and I'll still be the champion on Saturday."



Putin opens Paralympics as Crimea crisis rages across sea

SOCHI (AFP) - Russian President Vladimir Putin opened the Winter Paralympics in the Black Sea resort of Sochi on Friday, an opportunity for people with disabilities to triumph but overshadowed by the crisis in Ukraine.

As athletes from 45 countries took part in the opening ceremony, only one Ukrainian competitor appeared in a symbolic, scaled-down presence of the country that has renounced Russia's intervention in Crimea.

Huge cheers accompanied skier and biathlete Mykhailo Tkachenko who came through the Fisht stadium in his wheelchair, with some in the crowd standing up in support as he carried the Ukraine flag.

Some Western countries have not sent government delegations to Sochi in protest at Russia's Crimea intervention leaving International Paralympic Committee president Philip Craven and International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach to greet the national teams of Britain and Germany.

Ukraine's team of 31 had decided earlier Friday that they would not be boycotting the Games.

The Paralympics in Russia, running until March 16, are a major symbolic step for a country that for decades stigmatised people with disabilities and which only began to build accessible facilities in the run-up to the international event.

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NBA: Spurs rout Heat in NBA finals rematch

SAN ANTONIO (AFP) - Tim Duncan tallied 23 points and 11 rebounds to power San Antonio to a 111-87 victory over Miami in a rematch of the two NBA finalists from last season.

Tony Parker finished with 17 points and four assists for the Spurs who snapped their five game regular season losing streak against the Heat.

Miami beat the Spurs 113-101 on January 26 at home in the first meeting between the clubs since the Heat beat San Antonio last season to win their second consecutive

league title.

San Antonio came close to beating the Heat in the finals but Miami prevailed with a dynamic game-seven win.

Boris Diaw tallied 16 points, eight boards and five assists on Thursday for the Spurs, who have won five straight and eight of nine overall.

Chris Bosh finished with 24 points with seven rebounds and LeBron James contributed 19 points and eight rebounds for Miami at AT&T Center.

The Spurs have now won 13 of their last 15 regular season



games against the Heat at home.

San Antonio will host the Orlando Magic Saturday on this homestand, then visit Chicago on Tuesday.

Miami had an eight-game winning streak halted Tuesday with a 106-103 road loss to the Houston Rockets.

It doesn't get any easier for the Heat who visit the Chicago Bulls on Sunday.

James, who had a superb month of February, also had seven assists against the Spurs after scoring 22 points against

Houston earlier in the week.

It was the worst loss of the 2013-14 season for Miami, marking the first time they lost consecutive games since losing three straight in mid-January.

James shot six-of-18 from the field and played a good portion of the second half in foul trouble, while Dwyane Wade finished with 16 points on seven-of-15 shooting.

Miami also shot just 44 percent from the field and committed 20 turnovers, including 10 in the final quarter.